September 27, 1961

Education Summary

A SEMI-MONTHLY REPORT ON NEW DEVELOPMENTS, TRENDS, IDEAS, AND RESEARCH IN EDUCATION

• TRENDS AND ISSUES

Over 25% of all Americans are now in school, the U.S. Office of Education estimates. This fall, a new all-time high enrollment of 49,300,000 students in the 50 states was on hand when the school bells rang. This is the 17th consecutive year of increasing enrollments, with an additional 1,400,000 over the 1960-61 all-time high.

Here are the breakdowns in enrollments by grade levels for public and private schools in the U.S.:

- Kindergarten through grade 8: 34,200,000.
- Grades 9 through 12: 10,800,000.
- College and university: 4,300,000.

To man the nation's schools an estimated 1,684,000 classroom teachers were needed—from kindergarten through college.

The U.S. Office of Education warns that the first really sharp increase in college enrollments will come about 1965, when high school graduates born in 1946 begin jamming the college portals. Currently, USOE says, the steadily mounting college enrollment is due to growing interest in attending college rather than from higher birth rates.

What will this education cost? Only the statistician can give an educated guess. However, the U.S. Office of Education has just released the figures for the school year 1959-60. Increasing enrollments, higher prices for goods and services brought the tab to a cool $15.6 billion—an increase of $2 billion over the last biennial survey. The Office of Education indicates that costs went up on all aspects of education except that of capital outlay for elementary and secondary schools—land, building and equipment.

The battle between educators and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has reached the courts. Last month, the Joint Council on Educational Broadcasting (JCEB), representing the educational community, filed a petition in the U.S. Court of Appeals against a ruling of the FCC, affecting the future expansion of educational television in the very high frequency band.

The Council was aroused when the FCC turned down requests for reserved noncommercial educational channels asked for by the Rochester (N.Y.) Area Educational Television Association and Pennsylvania State University. At the same time, the FCC proposed third commercial VHF channels for the two areas which the educators were trying to serve with public service programing.

The JCEB insists that the Commission's rulings favor commercial interests at the expense of noncommercial educational television.

The JCEB maintains that the Commission has not only dealt a serious blow to the development of educational television, but, by its actions, has also ignored the implications of its own recent studies. These studies revealed that the breadth and quality of commercial network offerings are woefully inadequate, and are built around a daily offering of Westerns, "private eyes" and "cops and robbers" programing. Since important public and national issues are raised, the JCEB has asked the federal courts to look at the entire situation.

Resign from the NEA—or else, Louisiana teachers were told by the state's attorney general at the end of August. The reason: Continued membership in the NEA would violate a 1956 state law that bars teachers from being members or contributing to any group advocating integration, on pain of dismissal. The NEA at its recent June convention adopted a resolution stating that the Association was deeply concerned with problems accompanying desegregation and urged compliance with the Supreme Court's decision to outlaw racial discrimination in public education.

The State Attorney's office said that unless its ruling is challenged in court, it has the weight of law. Referring to the NEA's resolution, the opinion stated: "A reading of this resolution convinces this office that the NEA favors integration as opposed to the law of Louisiana. . . . Any teacher who contributes to, is in association with, or becomes a member of the NEA would be violating this act and would be subject to removal by the school board."

The rise in juvenile delinquency is largely "among the children of the so-called white-collar classes," a Senate Juvenile Delinquency subcommittee reports. It based this claim on the rising trend of JD in the suburbs, the home of the white-collar worker.

• ADMINISTRATION: *Setting educational objectives for the gifted*

How does a school district go about rethinking and establishing the objectives for educating gifted youngsters? ask Robert F. DeHaan and Robert J. Havighurst in a new book. They describe three areas of study as necessary:

(1) Each local district, through its guidance department and teachers, should make an intensive study of the characteristics of the gifted students in its own schools. Although it is worthwhile to review outside research studies, it is more important that local studies be made of district children.

(2) Teachers who want to formulate adequate objectives for the gifted should study the lives of great men. What are the lives of the leaders, artists, scientists and executives like; of what do they consist? Unless educators know something of this they cannot project objectives for children who, in due time, may themselves become great. Biographies, autobiographies and interviews are good sources.

(3) Educators need to get a fundamental picture of our national purposes and the desires of humanity all over the world. What is the nature of the forces operating in the world? How are these communicated to gifted children? Since gifted children will be most influential in shaping these forces in the future, teachers need to understand what they are.

—*Educating Gifted Children,* by Robert F. DeHaan and Robert J. Havighurst, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 37, Ill. 362pp. $5.00.

Avoiding liability for student injury

How can a teacher or school employee defend himself from liability in a court case over a student injury? Frank Bennett, supervisor of Safety Education in the Baltimore schools, has prepared a practical guide in the Spring *Baltimore Bulletin of Education,* wherein he says that there are four common defenses whereby a defendant may clear himself:

"*Proximate Cause*" Before a teacher can be held liable, the court must establish "proximate cause," as an important contributing factor. The injury suffered by a pupil must be *a direct result of an action or failure of action,* without the actions of a third person or some unforeseen element.

"*Vis Major*" This is an action that is entirely unforeseen. Usually, this is referred to as an "Act of God," such as a sudden unforeseen gust of wind or other act of nature.

"*Assumption of Risk*" Some activities involve greater hazard than others, and in these situations the student participating is aware of the risk and, by participating, accepts it. In cases of this kind, it is reasonable to assume that both the teacher and the student recognize the risk and take necessary safeguards. First-aid equipment *must* be on hand for quick use, if necessary.

"*Contributory Negligence*" If it can be proved that the student has failed to act with reasonable prudence to safeguard himself, and has contributed to the action, resulting in injury, even though he had knowledge and realized the possibilities, then he has contributed to the accident and the staff member may be absolved. However, the staff member is required to avail himself of the "last clear chance" to prevent injury, or he may be held liable despite any contributory negligence on the part of the student.

In general, teachers can avoid liability suits when they recognize and accept the full extent of their responsibility for safeguarding students in their charge, Bennett says. But students also have a part in their own protection and the school's accident-prevention program.

Teachers have the responsibility of bringing to the attention of principals any defects in equipment, need for additional supervisory assistance and for re-evaluating practices or procedures that have a hazardous nature.

CURRENT READING OF SPECIAL INTEREST

The Adolescent Society, *by James S. Coleman. Free Press of Glencoe, 60 Fifth Ave., N.Y. 11. 368pp. $6.95. (Exposition of teen-age social systems, based on research in 10 high schools in varied communities, small rural to large urban. Considers value systems, attitudes, interests and achievements of the age group; effects of status systems on education.)*

• SCHOOL & PUBLIC: *The high cost of the tax collector*

With public interest focused on new avenues of desperately needed school revenue (see *School Board*), a new monograph issued by the Ohio State University Bureau of Business Research is instructive. The monograph, "Retailers' Costs of Sales Tax Collection in Ohio," is an extensive study of a representative sample of Ohio retailers in eight principal kinds of business and their costs in collecting the Ohio state sales tax.

The cost is 14.84% of the taxes collected.

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Professor James C. Yocum, under whose direction the study was made, explains that the 14.84% figure includes direct cost to retailers for collecting the tax of 7.93%, and an overhead expense of 6.91%.

This is the first study to provide definitive and representative data on retailers' costs of collection. It was found that these sales tax collection costs as a percent of tax liability are generally higher for smaller stores, lower for larger or chain stores.

• SCHOOL BOARD: *Housing developments and school financing*

A new housing development in a community doesn't pay its way in terms of the additional school facilities needed to provide for its children. At least this is what public school officials in Aurora, Colorado, have discovered in a study of school costs and property taxes. Their conclusion:

One hundred homes will send 148 children to school—15 to kindergarten, 85 to elementary, 25 to junior high and 23 to senior high school.

Facilities for these kids cost the district $272,500 in capital outlay and $53,576 in operating costs. For each typical home, the board spends $2,725 in capital outlay and $535 a year in operating costs.

These 100 homes, valued at $30,000 each and assessed at one-third of their cost, add $1,000,000 in property value to the tax rolls. Subsequently, a property tax rate of 53.5 mills would bring in only enough revenue for current operating expenses, nothing for capital outlay.

School costs and non-property taxes

Pennsylvania is taking the lead in levying taxes for school support from sources other than real property, the August *School Boards* reports. Already approximately 12% of local tax funds for schools are coming from non-property taxes.

The National School Boards Association publication says that other states are beginning to turn to non-property taxes for school revenue, with various sales taxes proving most popular—if any taxes can ever be said to be popular.

CURRENT READING OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Influence of Voter Turnout on School Bond and Tax Elections, *by Richard F. Carter and William G. Savard. U.S. Govt. Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. 31pp. Paper. 20¢. (Report of a study on the extent, effect and sources of voter turnout for school financial elections. Reference for administrators and school boards.)*

• CURRICULUM: *The "lost 8th grade" in Georgia*

The State Board of Education in Georgia has decided to standardize 8th-grade instruction in the state. Board chairman James S. Peters, in a recent meeting, pointed out that the Georgian 8th grade is not "wholly implemented." Why? When the 12th grade was added to the public school curriculum, the four high school grades were pushed up, leaving the 8th grade stranded in a kind of no man's land.

In many cases, 8th graders simply repeat 7th-grade work, parents complain. Peters read a letter to the board from Richard Henderson, prof. of teacher education at Emory, in which he described the 8th grade in Georgia "as a sort of 'lost grade,' tacked on to the lower end of high school."

"No one quite knows what to do with this grade," Henderson pointed out, "so that too often instruction of these pupils is turned over to coaches and other staff members who have nothing better to do with their time."

The board promises an investigation and remedies.

CURRENT READINGS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Language Arts and Life Patterns, Grades 2 through 8, *by Don M. Wolfe. Odyssey Press, 55 Fifth Ave., N.Y. 3. 615pp. $5.00. (Comprehensive text or reference covering all aspects of language-arts program. Discusses written and oral communication, grammar and mechanics, literature. Many appendices; bibliographies for various purposes.)*

Comparison of Practices in Handwriting Advocated by Nineteen Commercial Systems of Handwriting Instruction, *by Virgil E. Herrick et al. Handwriting Foundation, 1426 G. St., N.W., Washington 5, D.C. 111pp. Paper. $1.50. (Service publication covering available commercial materials for teaching handwriting. Compares [but does not evaluate] the various systems. Intended as a research and preliminary study in the field.)*

• MATH PROGRAM: *New thinking in school mathematics*

A world shift in emphasis in math teaching—stressing the logic, structure and unity of math as a whole, instead of the mere solution of routine problems in isolated branches—has been urged by an international seminar for improving math education.

The seminar, sponsored by the Organization for European Economic Cooperation, was held at Royaumont, France, in 1959. The report of the Seminar, "New Thinking in School Mathematics," sums up thinking of top mathematicians and math educators of 16 European countries, the U.S. and Canada, and was written by Howard F. Fehr of Teachers College, Columbia University.

Among conclusions reached:

– School geometry and algebra must be adapted to the new advances in math, with the elimination of "much obsolete or technically valueless" material now incorporated.

– Geometry and algebra must be taught as related subjects and as part of a unified math. "They should be so taught that the difference between the two will gradually disappear."

– Children must learn to calculate with reasonable speed and accuracy in the first five or six years of

school. Starting in the fifth year, bright kids can be taught number theory, other specialized aspects including statistics and the use of symbols as an introduction to algebra.

– Euclid as now taught "should be greatly modified." The essentials of Euclid can be learned intuitively from ages 11 to 14, and a few months of later study should make clear the system of axioms, etc. If Euclidean geometry is changed, then much about triangles and other topics "must go," the report declared. Euclid's synthetic geometry can be replaced by a program of elementary math in which deductive geometry is treated by the use of vectors or real numbers, and later merged with algebra.

The 246pp. report is published by the Office for Scientific and Technical Personnel of the Organization for European Economic Cooperation in Paris.

CURRENT READINGS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Exploring Mathematics on Your Own, *by William H. Glenn and Donovan A. Johnson. Doubleday & Co., 575 Madison Ave., N.Y. 22. 303pp. $4.50. (Reprint of the first 6 of the Webster Publishing Co. series of pamphlets under the same title. Covers numeration systems, number patterns and theory, theory of sets, topology, Pythagorean Theorem. Reference volume or source-book for enrichment.)*

Problem-Solving Methods in Science Teaching, *by Lester C. Mills and Peter M. Dean. Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, 525 W. 120th St., N.Y. 27. 88pp. Paper. $1.50. (Explains the method, points out applications in various physical and earth sciences and evaluates the technique.)*

• HIGHER EDUCATION: *General vs. specialized training for undergrads*

Southern Illinois University recently polled its alumni as to their opinion, based on their postgraduate experience, on whether specialized training on the undergraduate level was a good thing. The results:

– 45% thought intense specialization a hindrance.
– 80% felt there should be an increased emphasis on acquiring a broad general background knowledge.
– 85% thought this background should be done before intense specialization began.
– 75% said intense specialization should be concentrated in graduate work.
– 90% favored an increasing emphasis on graduate and professional programs.

Dr. Charles D. Tenney, SIU's vice president for instruction, noted that the answers to the questionnaire were of a nonstatistical nature with many qualifying marginal notes.

One interesting factor developed by about 75% of the alumni was the idea that vocational training for students not seeking college degrees should be increasingly emphasized on the college level. Graduates during the last 15 years suggested courses such as computer technology and rocketry mechanics, as well as mechanical skills.

• HEALTH: *Liquor, not tobacco, No. 1 maturity symbol for teen-agers*

Drinking has replaced smoking as the symbol for maturity among high school pupils, Dr. Paul Patterson, chief pediatrician at Albany Medical Center Hospital, told a hearing of the Joint Legislative Committee On Intoxicating Liquors in Albany. The committee is making the first comprehensive study of New York State's liquor law, since its adoption 27 years ago.

"We are finding more and more," Patterson said, "that the adolescent boy is turning to alcohol to give him courage with the opposite sex." He accused the state of being lax in allowing kids to have access to liquor. He pointed out that in 1953 a study showed that 86% of teen-agers in Nassau County used liquor, as opposed to a national 35% average.

Dr. Herman Goldberg, chairman of the psychology department of Hofstra College, who also testified, pointed out that the law was not responsible for youthful drinking habits–it is the parents. If the parents are heavy drinkers, the children usually are. If parents abstain, children do also.

Goldberg pointed out that the 18-years-of-age minimum had no appreciable effect upon the use of alcohol by high school students. "The parental law is notably more significant than the statutory law," he said. "The problem of teen-age drinking cannot be solved by legislation."

QUOTE: . . . "When we now look from a certain vantage point at the struggle of man to find ever better forms of education, to establish a constructive balance between the various polarities of civilization, to prevent the great institutions, such as the state and community, as well as the great aspirations, such as religion and humanism, from the danger of hardening and perversion, and finally to lead men to the awareness of mankind–for what, we may ask, is man really struggling?

"Our answer is: Whether or not he is conscious of it, he wants to be free. He wants to liberate himself from the shackles that obsolete organizations and distorted ideas fasten around his ankles even when his mind may already look toward new horizons.

". . . On the capacity of man to understand himself as a participant in a macrocosm that is at once his source, his friend, his threat and his mystery–on this capacity depends his freedom. For freedom is the power of the soul to have purposes worth living for, and to feel at home within a cosmos of infinite promise and chance, but also of infinite risk. The coward is never free."

– Robert Ulich in *Philosophy of Education,* American Book Co., 399pp. $5.00.

Itaque se inclinans caput in foramen introduxit et clamavit:

'Heus, ecquis domi est?'

Fuit intus rumor quidam sternutamenti similis et deinde denuo silentium.

Winnie Ille Pu

'Bis audivi. Dic, ecquis domi est?' clamavit Pu magna voce.

'Minime,' respondit vox; deinde subiunxit: 'Noli tam magna voce clamare. Jam in primo te clarissime audivi.'

'Malum!' dixit Pu. 'Nemo prorsus adest?'

'Nemo!'

'O!' dixit Pu.

Caput e foramine extraxit, aliquamdiu meditatus est, deinde caput iterum immisit et dixit:

'Quaeso bona venia, dic mihi: ubi est Lepus?'

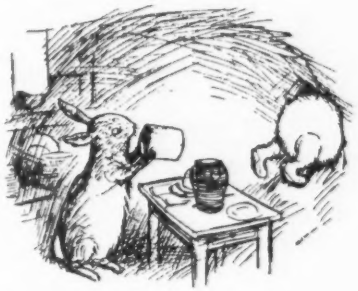
'Abiit ad amicum suum Ursum Pum visendum, quia ille ei ex animo amicus est.'

'Sed egomet sum ille!' exclamavit Pu obstupefactus.

'Tune ille ursus?'

'Ursus Pu.'

'Tibi persuasum est?' dixit Lepus magis etiam obstupefactus.



'Credo hercle esse,' dixit Pu.

'Age igitur, veni intro!'

Pu sese pressit, pressit, pressit et tandem per foramen se intulit.

'Jure dixisti,' inquit Lepus eum ab omni parte conspiciens. 'Certe, es. Gratus mihi venis.'

'Quid cogitavisti quis essem?'

'Pro certo non habui. Non ignoras, quomodo res in

"This year was a sizzler for Latin," Dr. Gilbert Highet remarked recently. And a sizzler it was, with Latin causing almost as much commotion as the Russian *nyet*. Among other events, these added to the clamor: Riots at Harvard following the decision to "English" the diplomas; President Kennedy writing Latin thank-you notes to the Dalton School girls (averaging only one error per letter); and Columbia's valedictorian, with one eye on Harvard's humiliating fall from cultural grace, delivering the first Latin oration at King's College in 50 years. Underneath these rhetorical flourishes, was the U.S. Office of Education's announcement that Latin currently was the second most popular foreign language study in the nation's schools.

Gilding the Latin lily, however, was Eduardus Ursus, alias WINNIE ILLE PU, the noblest Roman of the New Frontier. Published last December by Dutton, Dr. Alexander Lenard's superb Latin translation of A. A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* had done more than the classicists to put Latin texts on the best-seller lists. In less than nine months it was bucketing along at over 100,000 copies sold—to the great satisfaction of the second-year Latin anti-Caesar cells scattered throughout the nation's high schools.

The success of WINNIE ILLE PU depends in part upon Milne's tailor-made "pony"; but the translation itself results from the able, meticulous scholarship of Dr. Lenard. Elliot Graham of Dutton's tells us that Dr. Lenard researched five centuries of Latin literature to find the ideal phrases that chattering toy animals would use. "Cicero, St. Augustine, Propertius all contributed. Suetonius taught him how to translate a fit of coughing correctly; Ausonius supplied the word for an expert in puzzles; Vergilius, leading his hero into the Underworld, helped Rabbit to ask if the voice really belonged to his friend Pu. Martialis (*scripsit meus ista Porcellus!*) and Persus were able to solve additional difficulties."

Lingua vivit an mortua est? PU,* on the basis of the enthusiasm engendered in Latin classes, is here to stay. *Benedicite!

—WINNIE ILLE PU, by A. A. Milne, trans. by Dr. Alexander Lenard, E. P. Dutton & Co., 300 Park Ave., South, N.Y. 10. 121pp. Illus. by Ernest Shepard. $3.00.

• AUDIO-VISUAL: *A new, inexpensive long distance TV system for education?*

A new television system for sending pictures long distances via short wave transmission was demonstrated in Brooklyn last August by Sid Deutsch, Associate Prof. of Electrical Engineering at Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn. The new device uses a signal band of 45 kilocycles in place of the four megaton band in conventional TV. This "narrow band" transmission would use only a small part of the short wave frequency between eight and 20 megatons. In conventional TV, band-width requirements would use up a large part of the short wave band. In Deutsch's system, the band-width requirement is cut by a factor of nearly 100.

The heart of Deutsch's device is a "pseudo-random" scan in which the spot of light that eventually forms the image moves horizontally at 20 cycles a second and vertically at 2.5 kilocycles. A fine local scan that moves in a hop, skip and jump is superimposed on the larger movements of the spot of light.

Observers who have watched the Deutsch system in operation report that rapid movement on the screen is blurred. Dr. Deutsch believes that this blurring is not too important where there is little action. For this reason, he believes that his system is capable of serving the needs of educational TV at far less expense than conventional equipment. The blurring is not so important in ETV, he says, because the instructor remains nearly motionless.

CURRENT READING OF SPECIAL INTEREST

And TV Too! *NEA, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington 6, D.C. 63pp. Paper. $1.25; discount on quantities. (Pamphlet on various aspects of ETV for classroom teachers. General coverage of the technique.)*

• TEACHING METHODS: *Re-assess the teaching of language and literature*

Because of the accelerated change in society, language and literature teaching should be re-examined, Dr. Warner G. Rice, chairman of the University of Michigan's English Department, told the recent annual Conference Series for English Teachers.

In today's world nothing stays the same for long, Rice said, and it is increasingly difficult to bridge the gap of a few years between generations. Communication techniques are changing swiftly; the telephone has replaced letter writing; computers communicate with no written words; and formulae and graphs are in common use. Therefore, Rice pointed out, let's develop proficiency in teaching English as a communication skill at the elementary and secondary level, with less teaching of high school English in college. He also suggested the place of composition be re-assessed.

Finally, he suggested that in the future new methods and media would continue to replace written communication and "writing would become the province of the specialist."

• TEACHING MACHINE: *Programed textbooks and problem solving*

A six-week course, the first of its kind, was given to 21 local high school students at the University of Illinois High School this summer. The course was creative problem solving, and taught through the use of programed textbooks.

Researchers at the university's Training Research Laboratory are now determining from student performances how much of the generalized skill acquired through teaching machines is applied by the student in problem solving. So far, they have found that students can master properly prepared, advanced materials—the average scores of the high school students matched those of a college class doing the same work in the spring semester.

• PHILOSOPHY & GOALS: *The changing American character*

We are in an era of "some deepgoing character changes," Dr. Leopold Bellak writes in the August *Archives of General Psychiatry*. He predicates these character changes upon actual changes in the way we live today.

"The outstanding characteristic of American culture today is the impact of communication and change: TV, radio, newspapers, magazines and tons of professional literature bombard us constantly," Dr. Bellak points out. The loss of identity of modern man is largely the result of adaptation to a constant flow of changing stimuli—"any event, indeed any individual, is merely a matter of the moment."

Dr. Bellak believes that increasingly a character structure will develop "which we used to call a character disorder," one characterized by "shallow, transitory object relations with little subjective feeling." The new American may appear well-functioning enough, but hardly anything will go more than skin deep; he will have developed an armor to ward off more intense feelings.

The exterior of the new American, Dr. Bellak concludes, "may well become more civilized, literally, more urbane. Greater interaction and interdependence alongside the probably still higher standard of living will presumably make for manifestly more amiable relations. A kind of 'cocktail party sociability' may prevail, a culture of the urbanely uninvolved."

• LEARNER: *Step up the learning process*

Current methods of managing the learning process in American high schools are "not equal to present-day demands on education," Francis S. Chase, dean of Chicago's school of education, told a recent workshop of teachers and school administrators.

He pointed out that high schools in the U.S. will not only continue to change, but to change even faster because of the attempt to keep the curriculum

current with new knowledge; new emphases on teaching media such as programed instruction, TV and other audio-visual materials; and the search to take some of the load off the teacher's back.

However, if the high school is to change constructively, "it must find better ways of managing the learning process in relation to individual differences." Dean Chase suggested four ways of producing better and more mature learners:

– By stimulating students to develop their own ideas and to challenge and reflect upon ideas encountered in books or elsewhere.

– By encouraging them to make intuitive explanation of phenomena, then test their guesses by gathering and assessing relevant data.

– By helping them to experience the joy of learning, yet appreciate the necessity for accuracy in "measurement, thought and expression."

– By encouraging students to set high aspirations and to expend the effort necessary to attain them.

CURRENT READING OF SPECIAL INTEREST

The Education of Slow Learning Children, *by A. E. Tansley and R. Gulliford. Humanities Press, 303 Fourth Ave., N.Y. 10. 255pp. $5.50. (Guidebook outlining aims of such teaching and methods proven successful. Summarizes characteristics of backward children and recent curriculum developments. Authors are teachers of educationally subnormal children in England. Primarily for in-service training or beginning teachers.)*

• GUIDANCE: *At what age should youngsters begin dating?*

Boys and girls under the age of 15 should not be allowed to date, Dr. David R. Mace, executive director of The American Association of Marriage Counselors, warned in the August *McCall's* magazine. He blamed many of America's current problems, including cold-war problems, on our dating customs.

"Anyone who imagines that immature teen-agers can be together in pairs, in the complete privacy that automobiles afford, in a culture saturated with sexual suggestion, and not indulge in sexual experimentation is just not being realistic," he said.

The current trend in dating at earlier and earlier ages, he commented, is an important contributing factor in the nation's high divorce rate and lowering of moral standards.

CURRENT READING OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Guiding Superior and Talented High School Students, *by Frank S. Endicott. Superior & Talented Student Project; order from North Central Assn., 5835 Kimbark Ave., Chicago 37. 84pp. Paper. Apply. (Outlines program essentials for identifying and counseling superior students. Intended for those interested in setting up such a program or in improving existing guidance work.)*

• READING PROGRAM: *Public opinion and the teaching of reading*

Educators should stand firm and resist the pressure of public opinion upon methods of teaching reading, Dr. William D. Sheldon, director of the Syracuse University Reading Laboratory, said in delivering the 21st annual J. Richard Street Lecture at Syracuse.

"Sometimes the pressure of public opinion is stronger than the accumulated knowledge of reading specialists and the weight of research in producing changes in methods of reading instruction," he pointed out. As an example, he cited the recent trend of teaching reading in kindergarten as a result of public pressure, in spite of the fact that research of the last 20 years shows that this premature teaching can be hazardous. In New York State alone, he said, as many as 50% of kindergarten teachers present formal reading readiness materials in the second half of the year.

In place of formalized reading instruction, Dr. Sheldon urged the continuation of informal language activity. There's no question, he said, but that one child out of 30 entering kindergarten has already made a good start in reading. It is doubtful, however, that "the success of the one should have the effect of changing what has proved to be a good learning experience for the other twenty-nine."

• SCHOOL PLANT: *Classrooms without windows*

Montgomery County, Md., has spent at least a part of the past summer looking for ways to make new schools adaptable for future changes. Under serious discussion and scrutiny have been the pleas of school architects to do away with classroom windows.

In a test to determine whether students concentrate better if the classroom lacks windows, school officials paneled the windows in four classrooms to test pupil-teacher reaction. Although the first few days were eerie, reported one teacher, students *did* pay closer attention, were less distracted by outside goings-on.

Meanwhile, at a two-day Maryland Conference of the School Facilities Council, architects pressed their charge. Rhees Burkett, a Silver Spring architect, pointed out, "A great deal of money is spent unnecessarily on windows for rooms that are artificially lighted anyway." He contended that windows prevent flexible and efficient school design, since the size of the classrooms has been limited by the amount of light from windows.

Now, he said, architects are able to provide for the teaching of large groups, small groups and single students—all in one easily adjustable space, if windows are dispensed with.

How does the County school board feel about it? It expects the build two nearly windowless schools in the near future.

CURRENT READING OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Functional Schools for Young Children, *by James L. Taylor, Lillian L. Gore and Hazel F. Gabbard. U.S. Govt. Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. 31pp. Paper. 65¢. (Guidebook for planning facilities for K-3. Intended for administrators and architects. Includes photos, charts and reference material lists.)*

• PANORAMA

The nongraded school

What is a nongraded primary school, how is it structured, how does it function? The Western New York Study Council, in response to inquiry among its member schools in the western tier of New York counties, has brought together in a comprehensive report, all that it has been able to find out about the workings of the ungraded primary in those schools throughout the nation where it has been tried.

The report is divided into five sections: (1) Statements from teachers and administrators working in the ungraded schools; (2) a brief introduction; (3) a survey of communities across the nation; (4) an inquiry into the local situation and; (5) a short conclusion which includes pertinent tips for interested schools. The Council takes no position with regard to the ungraded primary. "Its accomplishments or lack of accomplishments must speak for themselves."

The first ungraded school was started in Milwaukee in 1942, although the College Avenue School of Athens, Georgia, has had a continuous progress school since 1939. By 1957-58, over 50 communities had nongraded programs and at least 30 more were considering the plan. Since then, interest has increased considerably.

Says the Council in this report: "At the present time, there is no evidence to suggest that the nongraded school is incapable of achieving the traditional, educational ends of the graded elementary school. According to Goodlad and Anderson (*The Nongraded School*, Harcourt, Brace), the little evidence that does exist indicates that the nongraded classes achieve as much if not more than the graded classes."

The Council in a concise statement sums up: "It should be stated that the nongraded plan is a system of organization and nothing more. Reorganization in and of itself will resolve only organizational problems. Nongrade structure is no 'cure-all' for problems of curriculum and instruction. Until the teacher understands what nongrading permits him to do, he will teach no differently from the way he taught before. However, when he does understand the freedoms which nongrading permits creativity may follow. He will not have to worry about encroaching on the work of an upper grade. . . . He now will be able to work without the crippling fear of having to fail any child who does not come up to the grade standard by the end of the year. Moreover, he will not need to worry about a child's reading being in advance of his arithmetic."

Particularly valuable in the report are the case studies of individual schools, ranging across the nation, indicating precisely what each is doing in nongraded structuring, with an analysis of its success.

For information in regard to the report, please write: The Western New York School Study Council, Foster Hall, University of Buffalo, Buffalo 14, N.Y.

New Classroom Material

1. SOLID GEOMETRY MODELS . . . can be constructed with *Solid Shapes Lab*. Package contains sturdy colored cardboard panels (prenotched, perforated) for assembly into simple or complex polyhedra. Manual included (64pp) gives instructions and diagrams; definitions and applications of fundamental principles, including Euler's Theorem. From: Science Materials Center, 59 Fourth Ave., N.Y. 3. $5.95.

2. PRIMARY TEACHER'S SOURCEBOOK . . . is *Rhymes for Fingers and Flannelboards*, by Louise Binder Scott and J. J. Thompson. Very useful volume gives a great variety of finger plays, with rhymes and cues, for many teaching purposes. Includes directions for displays for flannelboards, with illustrations for most. From: Webster Publishing Co., 1154 Reco St., St. Louis 26, Mo. 136pp. $2.70.

3. FILMS, FILMSTRIPS, SLIDES . . . on Colonial Williamsburg are listed in free brochures. Various classroom applications and grade levels. Full description of each item, which may be bought or rented. Films can be previewed for purchase consideration. Request brochures from: Film (or) Slide Section, Colonial Williamsburg, Williamsburg, Va.

4. LIBRARY REFERENCE . . . is *What Does A Civil Engineer Do?*, by Robert Wells. Describes, with many excellent photos, the types of large construction jobs civil engineers plan and direct. Handsome book for ages 8 and up. From: Dodd, Mead & Co., 432 Fourth Ave., N.Y. 16. 64pp. $2.50.

5. SENIOR HIGH BUSINESS COURSE FILM . . . is *The Check Collection*. Shows step-by-step procedures in check collection and payment. Explains functions of the clearing house, correspondent banks and the Federal Reserve System. Focus is on basic operations rather than complexities. From: Audio-Visual Center, Indiana Univ., Bloomington, Ind. 16mm; 21 minutes; b/w only; $1.00.

6. BOOK-FILMSTRIP-RECORD UNIT . . . clearly presents *The Story of Yankee Whaling*. Three 66-frame strips in color; 12" 33⅓ LP record and color-illustrated book give a complete presentation for various classroom uses. Middle-upper grades. Designed to motivate further reading. From: Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Inc., 1150 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, Ill. Book and filmstrips, $19.90; record, $4.95.

7. NATURAL HISTORY READING . . . is *Muir of the Mountains*, by William O. Douglas. Biography of John Muir, the famous naturalist, written for age 11 up. Includes many quotes from the naturalist's own writings. Many illustrations. From: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2 Park St., Boston 7. 184pp. $2.80 (library edition).

8. COLLECTION OF MONODRAMAS . . . is *Modern Monologues for Young People*, by John Murray. Gives 25 royalty-free sketches for teenage use. Easily staged; simple property requirements; all comedies. From: Plays, Inc., 8 Arlington St., Boston 16. 146pp. $3.95.